

# Ben Wyvis Primary School Nursery Day Care of Children

Ben Wyvis Primary School  
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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
6 March 2023

**Service provided by:**  
Highland Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003001693

**Service no:**  
CS2003017190

## About the service

Ben Wyvis Primary School Nursery is a day care of children service situated in a new, purpose built extension to the school building, in the village of Conon Bridge. The service provides a breakfast club, early learning and childcare and after school care.

The service is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of 80 children aged three years to attending primary school. The service is situated in a residential area close to the village centre near local shops and other amenities. The children are cared for in two inter-connecting playrooms and have access to an enclosed outdoor area.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on Thursday 2 March, between 08:10 and 16:30, and Friday 3 March, between 08:30 and 15:30. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with four family members of people using the service
- spoke with five staff and management
- observed practice and daily experiences
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Staff interactions with children were warm, positive and nurturing, helping children to be relaxed and happy as they played; this contributed to the welcoming ethos of the nursery.
- Staff knew the children well which supported children to receive care and support which was right for them.
- Pressures on staff meant that they were not consistently responsive to children's needs.
- The service's quality assurance process should be developed to ensure it is robust and enables positive, measurable impacts of children's experiences and outcomes.
- Children's curiosity, imaginative play and problem solving skills benefited from the provision of a good range of loose parts, block play and open ended resources.

## From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How good is our care, play and learning?	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

## How good is our care, play and learning?

## 3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

### 1.1 Nurturing Care and Support

Children were supported by responsive, compassionate communication throughout their day at the service, helping them to be relaxed and happy. Children received a warm welcome on arrival at the breakfast club. Staff knew the children well so interactions were relaxed, comfortable and nurturing. Children arriving for nursery were welcomed in the same manner which helped them to settle to play and choosing activities quickly and confidently. Similarly, children attending the out of school care provision also experienced warm, compassionate interactions.

Children attending the breakfast club benefitted from established routines being in place to support a positive experience. This included children washing their hands just after their arrival and prior to sitting down to be served food. They were able to pour either milk or water for themselves. This was a relaxed time for these children. A member of staff sat with them and they enjoyed sociable conversations together.

Nursery children had some opportunities to develop independence skills by being involved in some aspects of snack preparation. Hand washing hygiene routines were not always rigorously monitored. This meant that some children's hands were not washed properly. Utensils were not used when children were helping themselves to a selection of snack items. This increased the risk of contamination by germs. Some children brought their own water bottles from the playroom to use at the lunch table. This also increased the risk of contamination of food with germs. We advised the manager to improve infection prevention and control practices around snack and lunch times and made an area of improvement to support this. See area for improvement 1.

Nursery children's experience of lunch time was varied. The children went for lunch in groups to a canteen at five minute intervals. The last group of children to be served had to continue to play and wait for longer than half an hour before sitting down to lunch. This arrangement meant that children were not free to choose which peers they sat with. Staff were often task focused as they helped to serve lunch to the children. This meant that the room got quite noisy and some children missed out on a calm, relaxed mealtime experience. The high ceilings and acoustics contributed to noise levels. Where staff were able to sit with children, eating together, supporting them to eat well and to enjoy social conversation, this provided a better quality, calmer experience. The service should consider how to make lunch a calmer experience for all and explore ways to for staff to be focused on supporting and monitoring children as they eat.

Children were supported by staff who knew, not only the needs of their key children but others' needs too. This demonstrated how effective communication had a positive impact on children's care and support. Children received responsive care and support as personal plans were regularly reviewed with parents. Where appropriate to their needs, children's plans showed how partnership working with other professionals provided further support to promote positive outcomes. Children attending breakfast club and out of school care benefitted from: 'All about me' information in place to support staff to manage their needs and preferences. Staff demonstrated how their knowledge of the children's needs, their families and preferences supported positive outcomes.

Nursery children's health and wellbeing needs had been taken into account with the creation of a small rest area. An area for improvement from the previous inspection to create a suitable space for rest and relaxation had not been fully implemented. The small pop-up tent was set up on a folded mat. This arrangement provided some privacy but did not allow a child to lie comfortably or to be properly monitored by staff. There were cushions and a rug placed on the floor for out of school care children. There was no soft, comfortable seating for relaxing which would particularly benefit older children. We spoke to staff about developing more homely, cosy spaces for both nursery and out of school care children to promote rest and relaxation. See area for improvement 2.

We saw a child's medication being administered in a sensitive and safe manner. This demonstrated that children's health, safety and wellbeing was supported in a way which respected their dignity and privacy. Medication was stored and recorded correctly. However, there was not a robust auditing process in place for monitoring the management of medicines according to guidance. This meant that medicines had not been consistently reviewed within the minimum three month period as set out in the: 'Management of Medication in daycare of children and childminding services' guidance. We highlighted to the manager that medicines should be reviewed within this time frame.

Personal care was given to children in accordance with best practice guidance. Children were comfortable with established care routines and experienced care which respected their dignity.

### 1.3 Play and Learning

There were some opportunities for children to lead and make choices about their play and learning. In the nursery, children were free to move from one activity to another. Some areas, such as the block corner, provided opportunities for open ended play. Independence was encouraged when children helped make playdough.

Children attending breakfast club benefitted from a calm time to eat, relax and prepare for the school day ahead. They could choose from a selection of games and resources. Some chose to play an air hockey game, others a card game while some chatted with friends. There were not many opportunities for children attending out of school care to be involved in the preparation of snack. Children should be supported to have a greater role in snack preparation to help develop life skills.

Some parents were participating in an initiative to enhance play and language development with their children during the inspection. The service had implemented a 'Parents as Early Education Partners' (PEEP) programme and had provided staff training. Parents attending weekly sessions had been positive in their feedback to the service about the initiative.

Children's literacy and numeracy learning benefitted from some resources which promoted development of these core areas. Developing a numeracy and literacy rich environment to enhance children's learning was at an early stage. The service should consider how resources, which would support these core aspects of learning, could be made more visible and accessible. Improvements should increase opportunities for children to explore literacy and numeracy rich experiences by incorporating them into a wider range of activities and areas.

Most staff were skilled in enriching children's interests and learning through well-timed, skilful interactions. Children's learning benefitted from these effective interventions to extend knowledge and understanding. Some good quality staff interactions supported children's interest to be held, enabling deep engagement in imaginative and block play. This promoted communication between the children, developing their social and language skills. Some children were at the stage of mark making and writing numbers. There were missed opportunities to extend learning or to engage children in talking about their written representations. This happened when pressures on staff time presented challenges in meeting the needs of some children.

There were few opportunities for children attending out of school care to participate in activities which provided challenge and opportunities to follow their interests. The children's interests and ideas had not been effectively recorded and developed. This meant that there were no cohesive projects for groups of children, particularly older ones, to develop life skills such as simple baking skills, for example. The children were involved in an ongoing Scottish Government programme to develop a charter for school aged childcare. This involved creating a charter for their care in the service as part of a project.

The children were able to choose to play outdoors or indoors after snack. Loose parts were available to the children for open ended play. A lack of available storage limited the variety of outdoor resources available. Adding more natural resources over time would help to engage children's curiosity and creativity, as well as providing greater scope for challenge. See area for improvement 3.

Children's progress in learning and development was not yet consistently recorded through observations. The service had identified this as an area for continued development. Consideration should be given to developing a system which effectively identifies and records next steps in learning through high quality observations. Children's experiences were not yet fully responsive to their interests and stage of learning. Planning approaches in the service were under review to improve staff skills and knowledge in responsive and intentional planning. This should be linked with making effective observations and identifying next steps in learning and development. See area for improvement 4

## Areas for improvement

1. To keep children safe and healthy and to promote their wellbeing, the service should improve infection prevention and control measures.

This includes but is not limited to:

- a) providing children with utensils to self-serve snack to prevent cross-contamination of food
- b) ensuring that correct hand washing routines are established and maintained, according to infection prevention and control guidance
- c) items, such as water bottles, which have been stored and used in general areas are not used at tables where food is served.

This is to ensure that infection prevention and control practices are consistent with the NHS Scotland document: 'Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (Day Care and Childminding Settings)'.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

2. To ensure that children's health and wellbeing is supported the service should provide safe, cosy spaces where they can rest and relax comfortably. This includes but is not limited to providing a space for ELC children to comfortably lie down, where they can be safely monitored by staff.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'If I experience care and support in a group, I experience a homely environment and can use comfortable area with soft furnishings to relax' (HSCS 5.6).

3. To provide children with challenge and support to follow their interests and reach their potential, the service should review the resources available to children in breakfast and out of school care. This is to ensure, but is not limited to, providing opportunities for creativity, leading learning and problem solving.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'As a child, my social and physical skills, confidence, self-esteem and creativity are developed through a balance of organised and freely chosen extended play, including using open ended and natural materials' (HSCS 1.31 ).

4. To help children to reach their potential, the service should ensure that an effective cycle of high-quality observations supports and meets individual learning and development needs.

This should include but is not limited to:

- a) identifying key learning and next steps for individuals
- b) providing a balance of responsive and intentional planning to provide opportunities which support the learning and development of all children.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me' (HSCS 1.27).

## How good is our setting?

## 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Children's experiences and care benefitted from newly built facilities which were light, clean, safe and secure. Neutral wall colours contributed to a calm feel and natural look. Restrictions placed on how the service could use wall space meant that there were limited opportunities to display children's work.

There was some provision for children to rest and relax. The development of cosy areas across all playrooms had been highlighted at the previous inspection. The manager agreed that providing more comfortable homely touches should lessen the slightly clinical feel of the new building. They took immediate steps to further develop suitable and age appropriate areas for rest and relaxation throughout the service.

Children were supported to make their own choices about where they played as they were able to free flow between indoor and outdoor areas. Being able to spend time outdoors contributed to the children's wellbeing.

In the nursery, a good range of natural, open ended and loose parts resources were available, both indoors and out. These fostered children's imaginative play and promoted the development of problem solving skills.

Resources were suited to the range of children's ages and stages of development. In the nursery resources were provided to reflect children's current play interests. In one room children had been making pizzas from craft materials. This role play had been extended by staff who supported the children to create a restaurant to enhance their play. The service should evaluate the appeal and variety of resources across the day to support sustained engagement and to extend play and ideas.

Children attending the out of school care provision were supported to be safe. They were only able to play outdoors once the rest of the school had left the grounds and the gates had been secured. Only one child was using a device as their chosen activity and was closely supervised by a member of staff. This meant that they were supported to access games and activities safely. Confidential information was securely stored and was accessible to staff.

## How good is our leadership?

## 3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

The service had undergone a significant period of change, including managing a number of staffing pressures. A new senior practitioner had just joined the service at the time of inspection. These factors had impacted on the pace of change improvement.

Children's care and support outcomes benefitted from a manager and staff team who generally embraced a positive outlook to continuous improvement. The manager responded positively to advice given during inspection by supporting immediate changes to be made to identified aspects of service delivery.

The vision, values and aims of the whole school had recently been reviewed. These had not yet been fully incorporated into the daily life of the service in a meaningful way for younger children. Consideration should be given to achieving this to foster a sense of inclusion and connectedness for children as part of their day to day experience.

The service had not yet developed consistent approaches to quality assurance. An effective cycle of reflection, self-evaluation and implementation of improvements had not been established. The service was at an early stage of identifying actions for improvement which had realistic, achievable actions. These had the potential to impact positively on children's experiences and outcomes. Some monitoring of children's learning journeys had taken place. Moderation of these had included gathering feedback from parents. However, within the learning journeys, next steps in learning and development were not consistently identified to benefit children's progress.

The focus of staff meetings tended to be on the day to day operation of the service. We advised the service to include regular reflective and self-evaluative discussion at staff meetings. Combined with effective monitoring, these processes will help identify where impacts will have the greatest benefit to children's outcomes. These should include measurable, expected impacts on children's care, learning and development outcomes. Best practice guidance, such as: 'A Quality Framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare', should be used to foster change and improvement. See area for improvement 5.



Children's outcomes were not yet fully influenced by data gathered from parental feedback. The service had begun to seek parental feedback. They should now explore how to use this data effectively to inform planning for change. This should include making clear links with data gathered and how this is used to make change to impact positively on outcomes for children's care, learning and experiences.

### Areas for improvement

1. To ensure that children benefit from improvements which have the greatest positive impacts on their experiences and outcomes, the service should ensure that they have robust quality assurance processes in place.

This should include but is not limited to:

- a) regular opportunities for reflection and self-evaluation of practice
- b) regular monitoring of staff practice to identify good quality skills and practice as well as training needs
- c) regular monitoring of the quality of children's experiences
- d) identifying measurable impacts that will benefit children's experiences and outcomes
- e) meaningful opportunities for children and parents to be involved and influence change.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

### How good is our staff team?

### 3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Children's care and wellbeing benefitted from staff who communicated professionally with warmth and compassion. This created a welcoming, positive ethos where children felt respected and valued.

Children's play and learning benefitted from some staff using skilful interactions and open ended questioning to extend ideas and thinking. There were some missed opportunities to extend learning where staff were less experienced or skilled. Regular, effective monitoring of staff practice would support staff skills and talents to be cascaded and shared. The manager should evaluate the deployment of staff across the service to support the development of skills across the team.

Pressures on staff meant that children did not always receive high quality interactions and experiences. Pressures included a number of staff absences being covered by relief staff to ensure that minimum adult:child ratios were maintained. There were times when there was insufficient staff to balance giving support and care to children with extending and enriching children's learning and development. For example, when a member of staff had to leave the floor to provide personal care this impacted on the staff team's ability to responsively meet the rest of the children's needs. Staff told us they felt unable to give children best of themselves at times because they were so busy.

The manager was aware of the pressures on staff and had made provision for extra support at the busiest times of the day to help meet the needs of children, such as lunch time and for out of school care. There should be sufficient staff in place to help ensure that children's needs are met responsively and effectively, providing continuity of care across their day with the service. See area for improvement 6.

Children's safety and wellbeing was not consistently supported by clear communication between staff. Staff should continue to be mindful of communicating to a colleague each time they are leaving a room or area to provide consistent levels of supervision and continuity of care. Good communication between staff was evident when children were arriving and leaving the service. Children attending out of school care were supported to be safe by having agreed boundaries in place so that staff could see them.

## Areas for improvement

1. To ensure that children experience continuity of care across their day, the provider should ensure there are sufficient staff to flexibly meet the needs and care of all children attending the service.

This should include but is not limited to:

- a) monitoring the needs of all children to ensure they receive consistently high quality care and learning experiences
- b) establishing clear remits for each role within the service
- c) establishing the daily tasks and responsibilities of each role.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I know who provides my care and support on a day to day basis and what they are expected to do. If possible, I can have say in who provides my care and support' (HSCS 3.11).

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	3 - Adequate
1.1 Nurturing care and support	3 - Adequate
1.3 Play and learning	3 - Adequate
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	3 - Adequate
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.3 Staff deployment	3 - Adequate

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